

## WILTSHIRE SCHOOL CONTINUES TO RECOMMEND PARENTPAY AFTER TEN YEARS OF PARTNERSHIP

### THE ADVANTAGES OF GOING CASHLESS

Shirley Woodburn, Finance Administrator at St John's Marlborough Academy, recognises the benefits of going cashless: "We were keen to become more efficient in the way we dealt with payments coming into school. Ultimately this was to save staff time in recording and banking such payments, but also to ensure parents had an accurate view of their finances by not having to wait for a cheque payment to clear."

Safeguarding students by removing cash is a priority for many schools. Going cashless reduces the risk of bullying and allows parents to see what their child is spending their money on - this is particularly important for vulnerable groups of children. Shirley commented: "Security was also a big factor for us in choosing to go cashless meaning we don't have a lot of cash on site, reducing trips to the bank and removing responsibility from students for carrying & delivering payments. Students' bags can be a bit of a black hole when it comes to sending information home to parents and payments and permission slips to school."

### WHY CHOOSE PARENTPAY?

When comparing payment providers, ParentPay, as the industry leader, was the obvious choice when value for money, usability and functionality were considered: "Cost to us was a factor, but we also wanted an accurate, user-friendly system for both staff and parents."

As well as researching the best system, St John's Marlborough Academy also took into account the suppliers' reputations with other schools: "We wanted a progressive, forward thinking company with a proven track record. Regular transfer of funds from the collecting company to us was also necessary. We have been happily using ParentPay for ten years now".

ParentPay is trusted by over 9,000 schools nationwide and is used by 3 million parents.

### OBJECTIVE

Save staff time. Remove the need for parents to come into school to make payments.

### SOLUTION

A reliable and security conscious payment system provided by a progressive, forward thinking company.

### OUTCOMES

Staff spend significantly less time on finance admin. Happier parents.



ParentPay is a progressive, forward thinking company that suits our needs and I believe it will continue to do so as technology and time progress

Shirley Woodburn, Finance Administrator  
St John's Marlborough Academy

## PARENT AND STAFF RESPONSE

Parent response has also been positive: "We have 93% uptake. Once a payment is made via ParentPay the funds are committed so parents don't have to wait for payment to clear and are safe in the knowledge that we have received it."

As an active user, Shirley finds ParentPay to be an easy-to-use and powerful system: "I particularly like the various reports that can be produced from ParentPay and the quantity of information that can be gleaned, as well as the ease of setting up payment items. I find that on the whole it is an intuitive and user-friendly system."

Many schools find that their use of paper reduces dramatically following the introduction of ParentPay. Shirley says: "Permission for trips and activities can be given as part of the payment process, along with additional information that may have been requested."

## HOW TO GET PARENTS ONBOARD

Shirley feels confident that any parent with internet access would be able to use ParentPay and has found it easy to get parents' backing: "Many of our feeder schools now also use ParentPay, so parents are used to making payment this way. Cashless catering also meant that the number of users increased as it became necessary to use ParentPay to load funds to their children's lunch accounts. Most parents are keen to activate their accounts and we haven't found the need to do a hard sell. We have a leaflet that we produced about our use of ParentPay and its benefits to our academy and parents alike, which is given to parents of all new starters to the academy."

When asked to summarise her experience of ParentPay, Shirley said: "ParentPay is a progressive, forward thinking company which suits our needs and I believe it will continue to do so as technology and time progress."

## USEFUL TIPS

### 1. **AGREE A CASHLESS STRATEGY WITH SLT AND COMMUNICATE THIS TO ALL STAKEHOLDERS**

Your strategy could be something as simple as: From next term we'll be offering and encouraging parents to pay for items online, helping us reduce cash in school. Our aim is to be totally cashless in 5 years. Or, your strategy could be more aggressive: All parents must pay online or through PayPoint from next term.

### 2. **HAVE A PLAN THAT CAN DELIVER YOUR STRATEGY**

Plan key timescales including an onsite system demonstration, getting sign-off by SLT/Governors, staff training and roll-out. ParentPay advisors can help you with this.

### 3. **RAISE AWARENESS AND INTEREST**

Central to your plan should be communication with parents and staff. Keep communication simple and positive. Our advisors can work with you to plan communications to suit your school and our Parent Pack is filled with resources to help you better communicate with your parents. Aside from using your website, you could also use letters and emails as well as parents' evenings and events.

### 4. **SPARK ACTION**

Consider a promotion to encourage parents to pay online or through PayPoint e.g for a specific event or school trip.

### 5. **BE INCLUSIVE AND PROVIDE FOR CASH BASED PAYERS**

94% of parents prefer to pay online, but for those who don't or can't, sign-post them to PayPoint. There are over 28,000 PayPoint outlets in the United Kingdom.

### 6. **REMEMBER ALERTS AND REMINDERS**

Provide balance or new payment notifications via ParentPay's email and text system to increase early payments and drive uptake.

ARRANGE A DEMO OR REQUEST MORE INFO BY VISITING  
[WWW.PARENTPAY.COM/SCHOOLS](http://WWW.PARENTPAY.COM/SCHOOLS)